

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 14, 2016

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United Way of Anchorage Brings Reality of Financial Instability to Life With “WALK IN MY SHOES”

Anchorage, AK -- It's time to renew your bus pass. You need dental work. Your child wants to play soccer. Do you pass on the dentist and live with the consequences? Look for a free activity for your child when soccer is her passion? Seek a daily ride with a co-worker? With **WALK IN MY SHOES**, you make the decisions.

WALK IN MY SHOES is an interactive web activity that depicts real life scenarios faced by many of the more than 16,000 families living on the financial edge in Anchorage.

“We know that the full reality of living on the brink of financial instability can't be captured in an online activity,” said Sue Brogan, Vice President, Income Health Impact, United Way of Anchorage. “But this experience of walking in someone else's shoes can be a real eye-opener.”

You begin your **WALK IN MY SHOES** by choosing one of three people, each facing a different set of circumstances -- Dave, a widowed senior; Amanda, a single mother; James, a 42 year old father recently disabled. As you follow their path, you will be asked to make tough choices or take a risk because just as in real life, random events happen.

With limited income, and everything from medical payments and unexpected expenses that turn up to transportation and child care issues, your challenge will be to make it to the end of the month.

“I think when we're confronted with the difficult decisions many of our neighbors face each day—the juggling act that takes place around things many of us take for granted—we want to do something about it. With United Way, you can help ensure critical supports such as food, rent and utility assistance, and much more are in place to help keep families from falling off the financial tightrope,” said Brogan.

To take a **WALK IN MY SHOES**, visit www.walkanc.org. To take action and make a difference:

- Take part in United Way's Run and Walk for Warmth on February 20th. Basic needs such as rent and utility assistance are consistently the highest unmet needs in Anchorage according to **Alaska 2-1-1**, the statewide help referral line. Proceeds from this event help keep families warm, housed and fed. To register, go to: <http://bit.ly/runwalkforwarmth>
- Find a volunteer opportunity that supports family financial stability at www.BeTheChange907.org

About Alaska 2-1-1

Alaska 2-1-1 is an integrated communication system that connects Alaskans in need to help. Trained information and referral specialists have access to the most comprehensive database of community-based organizations, government agencies and nonprofits throughout the state of Alaska. Information can be provided in almost any language. Calls are confidential and free of charge. Operated by United Way of Anchorage Monday-Friday, 8am to 5pm, dial 2-1-1 or 800-478-2221, find us online at www.Alaska211.org

Download the App! Apple <http://apple.co/1TszTMI> or Android <http://bit.ly/1YUOYrr>

About United Way of Anchorage

United Way of Anchorage mobilizes people and resources to make lasting, measurable changes in our community to improve lives. Our priorities are successful, prepared kids; strong, financially stable families; access to medical care for all; and a community making healthy lifestyle choices. United Way invites you to join the movement. www.liveunitedanc.org

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